

Gestational Diabetes and Your Pregnancy

During your pregnancy, you are at risk for developing gestational diabetes. (*Gestational* means during pregnancy, and *diabetes* means you have more sugar in your blood than you need). It is one of the most common problems that can happen during pregnancy and usually develops near the end of pregnancy. Most pregnant women with gestational diabetes do not feel any different, so it's important that every expectant mom be tested between 24-28 weeks of pregnancy. If the diabetes goes untreated, your baby is at risk for death before birth or serious health problems. Below are some important guidelines to think about and more information about the disease.

You should be tested at your first prenatal care appointment if you:

- Are age 25 or older.
- Are of African, Caribbean Island, Hispanic or Pacific Islander origin.
- Have previously had gestational diabetes or have a family history of diabetes.
- Have given birth to a child who weighed over nine pounds or died before birth.
- Were more than 20 pounds overweight before becoming pregnant.

If you have gestational diabetes, your baby is at risk for:

- Stillbirth (baby is born dead).
- Birthweight of more than nine pounds.
- Premature birth and breathing problems.
- Birth injuries, such as a broken arm or collarbone.
- Low blood sugar after birth that requires special care.

If you have gestational diabetes, you are at risk for:

- Preterm labor (going into labor early).
- Birth injury from delivering a very large baby.
- Birth by surgery called a cesarean section or C-section.
- Developing adult diabetes.

If you have gestational diabetes, it is important to:

- Keep all of your prenatal care appointments.
- Test and record your blood sugar.
- Exercise safely and regularly (check with your doctor or nurse).
- Learn more about the disease from your doctor or health care professional.
- Be sure to eat the right foods.
- Be sure to monitor your activity, stress level, weight gain and if appropriate, insulin doses. (Insulin is a hormone that helps the body use sugar).

After your baby is born:

- Your diabetes may go away.
- It's recommended that you take another blood test 2-6 weeks after giving birth.
- Your blood sugar will need to be checked every year for diabetes.
- Continue to eat healthy and exercise regularly to reduce your risk of developing diabetes later in life.
- You are at risk for gestational diabetes in a future pregnancy.
- You are at risk for developing permanent adult diabetes within the first five years after your child's birth.

If you have been diagnosed with gestational diabetes, it's important to get the extra care you need. Remember, you can have gestational diabetes and a healthy pregnancy! Talk with your doctor or health care professional if you have any questions or concerns.

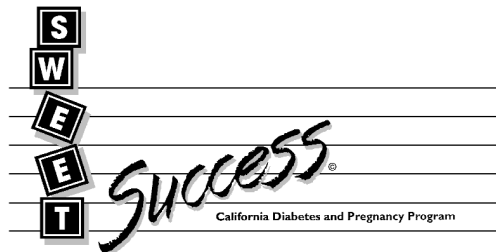
Important phone numbers that can provide you with more prenatal care information, support and referrals.

Sweet Success Diabetes and Pregnancy Program

Southern California 1-714-456-6706
University of California, Irvine
Medical Center - Sweet Success Program

Northern California 1-650-723-5763
Mid-Coastal California Perinatal
Outreach Program - Sweet Success Regional Office

Or ask your doctor or health care professional about a Sweet Success Program near you.



Source: Sweet Success Diabetes and Pregnancy Program

BabyCal
1-800-BABY-999